

Madam Speaker, we need to reform the Federal education bureaucracy. We need to make sure our tax dollars are being spent in classrooms, not in Washington. We need to prepare our children to be tomorrow's leaders.

We need to pass the Republican Dollars to the Classroom Act.

READ FINE PRINT ON GOP MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, in a "Dear Colleague" he circulated today, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) shared some exciting news about the GOP Medicare prescription drug plan. If only it were true.

He asserts that the Republican plan, which relies on private insurers to offer individual prescription drug coverage, would cut prices twice as much as the Democrat's Medicare-based plan. That is a strong selling point. It is also complete rubbish.

The Congressional Budget Office says the GOP drug plan may cut costs by 25 percent, not through lower prices, but by restricting access to medically necessary drugs.

It is an important distinction. I will say it again. The Republican plan saves money, not by miraculously convincing the drug makers to lower their prices, but by limiting access to medically necessary prescription drugs.

It cuts costs by decreasing the value of the drug benefit. The insurers win, the government wins, senior citizens lose.

The Republican plan gives insurance companies carte blanche to do what they are doing today; that is, put price tags on treatment decisions and then deny coverage for medically necessary treatments. Sound familiar?

The President's plan is explicit in requiring coverage for any medically necessary drug prescribed by a doctor, which makes sense since it is the doctor, not the insurer, who is actually treating the patient.

I ask my colleagues to read the fine print of the Thomas proposal.

SECURITY FAILURE AT LOS ALAMOS

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Madam Speaker, once again, our national security has been endangered by the incompetence of the Department of Energy. It seems that the DOE cannot keep track of our Nation's most sensitive and top-secret information.

After nuclear weapons information was stolen last year from the Los Alamos lab, the American people were

promised, they were promised that the lab security would be enhanced and such a security breach would never again occur.

Well that was 1999, Madam Speaker. So much for the Clinton-Gore administration promises.

It seems that the enhanced security did not take into consideration the human element. The human element is not one's pet dog.

Perhaps the DOE thought that the potential threat aliens from Mars posed to our national security needed to be addressed before ensuring that our top-secret information was secure from real-life human beings.

It is time that this administration wake up and make our national security a top priority.

I yield back the administration's so-called security policies which fail to protect our Nation's secrets.

TIME TO PASS SIMPLE 15 PERCENT FLAT TAX; ABOLISH IRS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, the Lord's prayer is 66 words; the 10 Commandments, 179 words; the Gettysburg Address, 286 words; the Declaration of Independence, 1,322 words; the United States Tax Code, 2 million 8 hundred thousand plus words. It is out of control.

In America, if a dog urinates in a parking lot, the EPA deems it a wetland. What is even worse, the IRS slaps on a hazardous waste tax. Beam me up here.

It is time to pass the simple flat 15 percent national sales tax and abolish the IRS.

I yield back all elements of the "Internal Rectal Service".

FLOYD D. SPENCE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001

(Mr. SKELTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, each year, the legislative process consistently yields a particularly important authorization bill, and each and every year that authorization bill is signed into law by the President. I am speaking of the annual Defense authorization bill.

A month ago on May 18, the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2001, aptly named for our distinguished chairman in his last year at the helm of the committee, passed the House by a strong bipartisan margin of 353 to 63.

The \$310 billion that this bill would authorize in the coming fiscal year rep-

resents the blueprint for defense policy and spending priorities as it does every year. Not only does it set the troop strength levels and extend expiring authorities, it goes to the heart of what our troops need to do the job. This bill will directly improve their quality of life, their readiness to fight, and the pace of the modernization of their equipment.

I am especially pleased that this bill contains several important new initiatives, including a comprehensive package of military health care reforms that would significantly improve access to quality health care for all military beneficiaries, particularly for over-65 military retirees.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to note that progress on the Defense Authorization bill, after passage in the House, has come to a sudden standstill in the other body. As I look about the legislative landscape, I see no other issue that I believe should take precedence over the authorization of the funds that our troops need. I hope that this situation can be dealt with quickly, and that we can get about the business of going to conference on a Senate bill and a House bill in the very near future.

The Congress needs this bill. The troops need this bill. The country needs this bill.

APOLOGY FOR SLAVERY

(Mr. HALL of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Madam Speaker, today, on a date African Americans celebrate as their second Independence Day, I am introducing a resolution. This bill would put Congress on record as apologizing for all of our country and this institution and what they did to promote and sustain slavery and its terrible legacy.

This building we work in and revere as one of the world's monuments to freedom and democracy, it is a place where much good has been done, but it is also one of the sites of one of the history's great wrongs, and that is slavery.

Mr. Speaker, this building we revere was partly built by slaves, people who suffered terrible wrongs, people I believe our Nation owes an apology.

I was surprised to learn that, despite the Civil War and despite the landmark civil rights legislation, despite all that has happened in the 135 years since the last slaves learned they were free, our Nation has never apologized for the savage institution of slavery.

I urge all of our colleagues to look in their hearts and support this bill.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives: